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ABSTRACT

The Student Teaching Connections Model has been designed specifically for aiding preservice home economics teachers in preparing for their student teaching assignment. The model has reference to the student teacher at two different stages: as a prospective student teacher, and in the actual student teaching role. In addition, the model consists of two primary components: Growth Experiences and Resource Elements. Growth Experiences involve activities that the student teacher will perform as they relate to the student teaching assignment. The Resource Elements component is comprised of constituents needed for the student teacher to complete the required activities. The Growth Experiences component contains seven primary Student Teaching Connections: the Home Economics Cooperating Teachers' Seminar, the Home Economics Student Teachers' Seminar Plan/Cover Letter, the Home Economics Pre-Student Teaching Classroom Visit/Observation, the Community Assessment, the Discipline Plan, Home Economics Instructional Plans, and Home Economics Student Teaching Seminars. The Resource Elements component involves cooperative participation from the university, the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, and the assigned school. (Brief descriptions of the intent and objectives of the seven student teaching connections are appended.) (YLB)

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HOME ECONOMICS STUDENT TEACHING CONNECTIONS: A MODEL

STRATEGIES DESIGNED TO PREPARE PRE-SERVICE HOME ECONOMICS TEACHERS FOR THEIR STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Presented at the
National Vocational Home Economics Education Conference
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Introduction

Issues pertaining to education have long been a part of the national conscience and is often a major focus of public debate. As a result of the National Commission on Excellence in Education's "Nation At Risk" report criticizing the American educational system, teacher education programs across the nation have come under closer scrutiny. However, much has been done and continues to be done by schools and colleges of education to improve teacher education programs. In many instances, the admission standards for teacher education programs have been increased; state certification standards have become more rigorous; and plans are underway to make the student teaching component of teacher preparation more meaningful. The student teaching component of the teacher education program is the focal point of this presentation.

Student teaching represents an important phase in the total preparation process of Vocational Home Economics teachers. It provides the aspiring teacher with opportunities to apply, to analyze, to synthesize, and to evaluate the theoretical concepts learned in professional education, subject matter, and general university courses. The duration of the student teaching experience varies from one institution to another and from one state to another. Since the experience comes at or near the end of the teacher preparation program, students should be well versed in home economics subject areas, teaching methods, home economics curriculum, developmental stages of adolescents, educational philosophies, work ethics, and other aspects of program planning. Beyond preparation in these areas,

little emphasis has been placed on preparing the prospective student teacher for the actual student teaching experience. Therefore, attention must be given to the initial student teaching phase to aid the student in having a successful experience. For example, prior to the start of the student teaching experience, the student teacher should have a knowledge of information such as where the experience will take place, who the cooperating teacher will be, what specific units and lessons will be taught, student characteristics, and community background. This information will set the stage for a more meaningful student teaching experience.

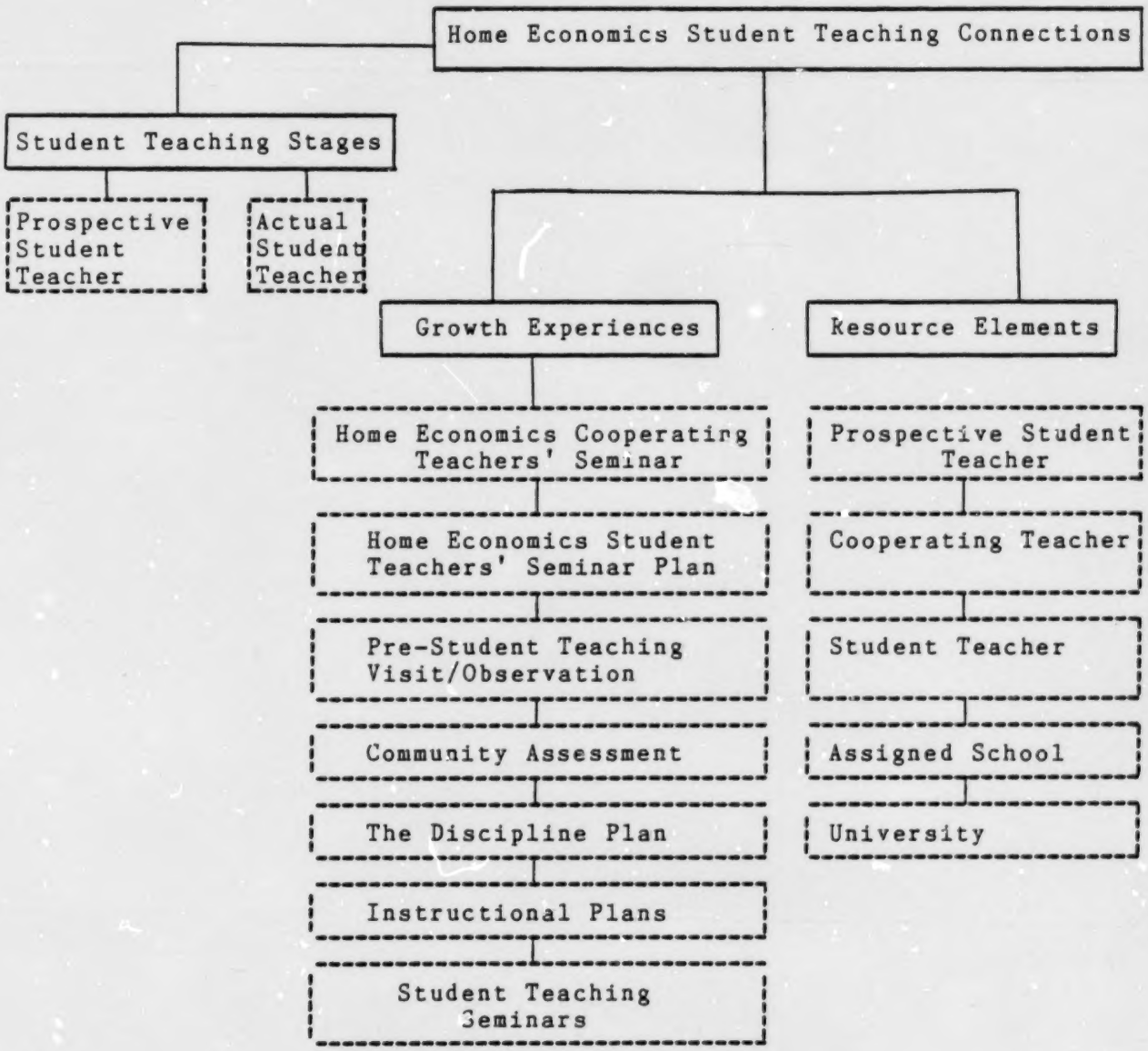
Since student teaching is a necessary entity of the teacher preparation process, more attention should be given to preparing the pre-service home economics teacher for the teaching experience. Some students need this preparation because the student teaching experience, sometimes, causes feelings of frustration, anxiety, and uncertainty. For others, it is viewed as an opportunity to meet new challenges and experience additional professional growth. A model used for preparing these pre-service teachers for assuming their student teaching roles is called the Student Teaching Connections Model.

Home Economics Student Teaching Connections Model

The Student Teaching Connections Model was designed specifically for aiding pre-service home economics teachers in "Getting Ready" for their student teaching assignment (Figure 1). This model has reference to the student teacher at two different stages: the student teacher as a prospective student teacher and the student teacher in

Figure 1

HOME ECONOMICS STUDENT TEACHING CONNECTIONS MODEL



the actual student teaching role. The prospective student teaching stage includes activities which takes place prior to the start of the real teaching experience. The actual student teaching stage takes place when the student teacher reports to the assigned school for an extended period of time. In addition, this model consists of two primary components: Growth Experiences and Resource Elements. Growth Experiences involves activities that the prospective student teacher and student teacher will perform as they relate to the student teaching assignment. The Resource Elements component is comprised of constituents needed for the student teacher, at both stages, to complete the required activities.

The Growth Experiences component contains seven primary Student Teaching Connections. They are as follows: Connection I-The Home Economics Cooperating Teachers' Seminar; Connection II-The Home Economics Student Teachers' Seminar Plan/Cover Letter; Connection III-The Home Economics Pre-Student Teaching Classroom Visit/Observation; Connection IV-The Community Assessment; Connection V-The Discipline Plan; Connection VI-Home Economics Instructional Plans; and Connection VII-Home Economics Student Teaching Seminars.

Connection I-The Home Economics Cooperating Teachers' Seminar (Appendix A) is planned to provide an opportunity for the cooperating teachers and the prospective student teachers to meet prior to the start of the student teaching experience. The seminar is planned to define roles, disseminate information, and minimize anxiety levels that are often experienced by both the student teacher and the cooperating teacher.

Connection II-The Home Economics Student Teachers' Seminar Plan/Cover Letter (Appendix B) is designed to serve as a tool for the prospective student teacher to obtain pertinent information regarding the assigned student teaching school, school community, total school program, home economics program, discipline policies, extra-curricular activities, students, parents, administration, and other topics of concern. The cover letter is written to accompany the Seminar Plan. It serves as the initial introduction of the prospective student teacher to the cooperating teacher and sets the tone for a homogeneous environment. The Seminar Plan is used, during the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar, to guide the dialogue between the prospective student teacher and the cooperating teacher.

Connection III-The Home Economics Pre-Student Teaching Classroom/Visit Observation (Appendix C) involves the prospective student teacher, cooperating teacher, and selective personnel at the assigned school. A visit to the assigned school is arranged, by the prospective student teacher, soon after the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar. This experience provides the prospective student teacher an opportunity to become acquainted with the physical school layout and classroom settings, to meet the principal and other school personnel, to observe interactions between the cooperating teacher and students, to observe how the cooperating teacher handles routine classroom procedures, to dress professionally, to obtain additional resources, to ask additional questions about school procedures, to discuss ideas about the teaching profession in general and home economics in particular, to get a feel for the community from which the students come, and to discuss concerns about the teaching assignment.

Connection IV-The Community Assessment (Appendix D) is designed to provide the prospective student teacher with an opportunity to obtain background information about the area in which the assigned school is located. By contacting the Chamber of Commerce, conducting library research, and using the city directory, the prospective student teachers will be able to obtain information concerning: the community people, population, available resources, local government, industry(s), businesses, employment opportunities, schools, and other areas of interest.

Connection V-The Discipline Plan (Appendix E) provides the prospective student teacher an opportunity to become involved in the management of student behavior. The Code of Acceptable Student Behavior and a copy of class rules should be obtained from the cooperating teacher. Using these resources, a plan for managing student behavior is developed to include preventive and consequential discipline strategies.

Connection VI-Home Economics Instructional Plans (Appendix F) consist of yearly, unit, and lesson plans. These activities provide opportunities for the prospective student teachers to view the total school curriculum; to view the home economics curriculum; to view scope and sequence of home economics program components and content; to prepare specific Competency-Based Lessons that will be taught during the student teaching period; to design bulletin boards and prepare other instructional aids; to teach lessons, within the university course, prior to teaching them in the student teaching situation; to evaluate teaching performance by critiquing video

presentations; and to get feedback from peers and the university supervisor concerning performance.

Connection VII-Home Economics Student Teaching Seminars (Appendix G) involve experiences that take place during the student teaching period. Seminars are held at the university every other week and are arranged by the university's home economics supervisor. These seminars are planned to allow student teachers opportunities to: interact with each other by sharing teaching ideas, experiences, and concerns; discuss topics such as discipline, lesson plan preparation, student motivation, and time management; provide peer support; have additional time to interact with the university supervisor; and identify and discuss problem areas encountered in the student teaching experience.

The Resource Elements component involves cooperative participation from several sources. These sources include: the University (Office of Field Service and Placement, a home economics course, and the home economics supervisor); the student teacher; the cooperating teacher; and the assigned school.

In order for the student teaching experience to be successful, there is a need for coordination and cooperation between the prospective student teacher and university personnel. For instance, the Universitys' Office of Field Service and Placement should play a very important role in the initial phase of student teaching. This office should notify the home economics supervisor several weeks prior to the start of the student teaching experience about the exact placement of the student teacher. If the notification is prompt, it will allow sufficient time for the prospective student teacher and the home

economics supervisor to confer about the assignment(s). Subsequently, the home economics supervisor and the prospective student teacher can have ample time to plan activities related to the student teaching experience. It will also give the University time to iron out potential problems, such as personality clashes between the student teacher and cooperating teacher, that may be caused by the nature of the assignment.

A Home Economics course, such as methods or curriculum, is desired to provide a common meeting place and a common direction base for the prospective student teachers. Through this course, Growth Experiences components or Home Economics Student Teaching Connections I, II, III, IV, V, and VI are completed. Growth Experience VII is completed during the student teaching period. These Growth Experiences are coordinated by the home economics supervisor and involve the assistance of the cooperating teachers, prospective student teachers, the assigned school, and other community personnel.

Together, the Growth Experiences and Resource Elements comprise the sum total of preparation necessary for the prospective student teacher in "Getting Ready" for the actual student teaching experience. The interdependent relationship between these two factions provides a systematic approach to the home economics teacher preparation process. Through these Student Teaching Connections, the pre-service home economics teacher will be better prepared to manage student teaching activities, as well as, have more time to perfect teaching skills. Also, these teaching connections, if carefully planned and executed, will afford the student teachers greater opportunities to minimize

potential anxiety and frustration levels and develop confidence in their teaching abilities.

APPENDIX A

CONNECTION I

HOME ECONOMICS COOPERATING TEACHERS' SEMINAR

The Home Economics Cooperating Teacher's Seminar is planned for the following purposes:

1. To inform the cooperating teachers, in a less restrictive environment, concerning their roles/responsibilities during the student teaching period.

2. To inform the cooperating teachers and prospective student teachers concerning the roles/responsibilities, as they relate to the student teaching experience, of the University Supervisor.

3. To allow the cooperating teachers opportunities to ask questions concerning their roles/responsibilities as they pertain to the student teacher and the experience.

4. To allow cooperating teachers an opportunity to meet and get acquainted with their respective student teacher.

5. To allow cooperating teachers an opportunity to meet and/or get acquainted with the University Supervisor and/or other University personnel such as the Dean of Education, Director of Field Services and Placement, and Department Head.

6. To provide the student teachers, in a less restrictive environment, an opportunity to become familiar with the program in which they will be involved for the student teaching period (example: March 7, - May 2, 1984).

7. To enhance the possibility of making the student teaching experience a period of true professional growth and development by minimizing the anxiety levels felt by student teachers as well as cooperating teachers.

NOTE: The Home Economics Cooperating Teachers' Seminar is planned and organized by the University Supervisor.

The Home Economics Cooperating Teachers' Seminar is planned after school for a minimum of three hours (3:00-6:00)

The University Supervisor will make contact with the assigned Cooperating Teacher only after appropriate clearance has been received from administrative offices involved.

APPENDIX B

CONNECTION II

THE HOME ECONOMICS STUDENT TEACHERS' SEMINAR PLAN AND COVER LETTER

The Home Economics Student Teachers' Seminar Plan consists of a list of questions grouped according to conceptual headings such as total school, Home Economics curriculum, and classroom policies. Organized in sequential order, these questions pertain specifically to individual student teaching assignments. However, the questions should be developed individually and cooperatively by all of the prospective student teachers.

The Home Economics Student Teachers' Seminar Plan is designed:

1. to serve as a tool for the prospective student teacher to obtain information regarding the assigned student teaching school, the community, total school programs, Home Economics Programs, discipline policies, extra-curricular activities, students, parents, administration, etc.

2. to serve as an "early" communication tool between the prospective student teacher and cooperating teacher.

3. to serve as a guide for the cooperating teacher in preparing for the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar as well as the student teaching experience.

4. to provide prospective student teachers, as a group, an opportunity to discuss concerns they view as important in relation to getting prepared for the student teaching experience.

5. to provide a communication link between prospective student teachers that will enable them to have a more thorough and complete set of questions for their respective cooperating teachers. (Note: The nature of the student teaching assignment will determine the type of questions and/or concerns that the prospective student teacher will include in the Seminar Plan; therefore, all of the questions listed by one student may not have relevance for another).

The cover letter is designed to :

1. accompany the Seminar Plan when it is mailed to the cooperating teachers.

2. introduce the prospective student teacher to the cooperating teacher prior to the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar and the beginning of the student teaching experience.

3. request that the cooperating teacher locate and bring to the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar resources such as: Student Handbook, Home Economics Curriculum Guides, School and Classroom Policies, and other pertinent documents.

4. request date and time for school/classroom visit.(Note: this date should be arranged,for maximum effect, after the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar has taken place).

APPENDIX C

CONNECTION III

PRE-STUDENT TEACHING CLASSPOOM VISIT/OBSERVATION

A visit to the assigned school should be arranged, by the prospective student teacher, soon after the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar. This experience is designed to provide the prospective student teacher opportunities to:

1. become acquainted with the physical setting of the school
2. meet the principal and other school personnel
3. observe the cooperating teacher in action
4. observe the students that he/she will be teaching during the student teaching period
5. dress professionally
6. obtain additional resources such as textbooks, teaching ideas, course outlines, etc. (Resources such as Handbooks, Curriculum Guides, etc. should have been requested in the cover letter and received at the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar)
7. ask additional questions (original questions would have been asked in the cover letter and at the Cooperating Teachers' Seminar)
8. discuss ideas about self, others, and the teaching profession in general and home economics in particular
9. get a feel for the community from which the students come
10. become acquainted with the classroom surroundings
11. observe student/teacher interaction
12. observe the teacher's handling of routine classroom procedures
13. discuss concerns pertaining to the teaching assignment

APPENDIX D

CONNECTION IV

THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

A knowledge of the community in which one works and lives is important for total professional growth and development. An understanding of ones' community increases his/her awareness concerning the following:

Community people
Available resources
Employment Rates
Types of Employment
Population
Religions
Schools
Business
Vital Statistics
Etc.
Culture
Income Levels
Transportation Systems
Government
Race
Culture
Industry
Recreation
Crime Rates

By understanding a community and its people, a teacher can make better use of available resources.

After the prospective student teachers have received their placement, they will be required to conduct a study of the area (County or City) in which the school involved is located. In order to obtain information for this activity, the prospective student teacher will do the following:

1. Contact the respective Chamber of Commerce for brochures, pamphlets, etc. about the area.

2. Go to the University Library and look up information pertinent to assigned area in Census Reports, Uniform Crime Reports, and other documents.

3. Use City or County Directories (Usually located in Local Libraries).

Finally, the prospective student teachers should prepare narratives of the city or county area in which their student teaching will take place. The narrative will be as succinct as possible and will include, but not be limited to, the aspects of the community as listed above.

APPENDIX E

CONNECTION V

THE DISCIPLINE PLAN

Statistics show that the number one "fear" among teachers (student teachers and teachers) is not being able to handle discipline problems that occur in the classroom. This fear can be minimized if certain precautionary measures are taken soon in the student teaching (or teaching) experience.

An ultimate goal of classroom management is to help students develop enough self-control to manage their own lives. Therefore, students need some structure. They need to know what is expected of them. Thus, it is important that the teachers (student teachers and teachers) establish a few rules, with the aid of students. Classroom management is enhanced when teachers are consistent, fair, prepared, and responsible. Teaching will also be more enjoyable....

Approaches to managing student behavior, as described by experts, are numerous. For the purposes of this Student Teaching Connection, strategies for managing student behavior is categorized as follows:

1. Preventive Discipline
2. Consequential Discipline

I. Preventive Discipline
This technique involves working with the students to establish reasonable rules for maintaining class control. These rules are agreed upon by all parties concerned (teacher, student, parents).

II. Consequential Discipline
This technique involves working with the students to establish actions to be taken if class rules are not adhered to. These actions are agreed upon by all parties concerned (teacher, student, parents).

In order for the prospective student teacher to become involved in the management of student behavior as it relates to the student teaching assignment, the following activities are recommended:

1. Obtain a Code of Acceptable Student Behavior or Code of Ethics from the Cooperating Teacher (should be received at Cooperating Teachers' Seminar).

2. Obtain a copy of class rules from cooperating teacher. These are rules that have been developed for use by the cooperating teacher in his/her particular class setting (should be received at Cooperating Teachers' Seminar).

3. Write a brief description concerning student charac-

teristics. Note unusual problem or difficult student. A knowledge of student characteristics helps in establishing reasonable limits.

4. Develop a Code of Acceptable Student Behavior based on documents and other information received from the cooperating teacher.

GUIDELINES

When establishing rules to prevent discipline problems from occurring, DO NOT make rules that YOU can not enforce.

Make rules to govern behaviors that usually interfere with the educational process.

Do not make a long list of rules.

Remember that discipline problems are minimized when the students are challenged, motivated, and involved in worthwhile learning experiences. (This is the number one rule to Preventive Discipline).

Consequential Discipline actions should be included with the rule.

All rules and consequential actions must be clearly COMMUNICATED.

Include agreement/contract for signatures of all parties concerned.

Post class rules in a visible place in the classroom.

NOTE: In most instances, student teachers do not have much freedom in developing rules for the student teaching situation. The rules have already been established, hopefully, by the cooperating teacher. However, the student teacher is expected to be familiar with the rules of the cooperating teacher as well as the school. The student teacher is expected to enforce rules within these established limits.

This activity alerts the student teacher to potential disciplinary problems as well as provides a tool for working out a plan for management of student behavior in an actual teaching situation....

APPENDIX F

CONNECTION VI

THE INSTRUCTIONAL PLANS

Generally speaking, the instructional plans consists of the following set of plans: the Yearly Plans, the Unit Plans. and the Lesson Plans. By developing these plans, in advance as they pertain to the student teaching assignment, the prospective student teacher will have an opportunty:

1. to view the total school curriculum and assess the relationship of the component parts;
2. to view the total Home Economics curriculum and assess the relationship of the component parts;
3. to view the scope and sequence of the Home Economics program components;
4. to view Home Economics course content including course titles, unit titles, topics , concepts, and objectives;
5. to view the scope and sequence of Home Economics units;
6. to prepare specific Competency Based lessons that will be taught during the student teaching period (These lesson plans should include the following components: lesson heading, introduction, instructional activities for students and teachers, instructional materials, time projections, lesson summary, lesson preview, assignment, resources, and references;
7. to design bulletin boards and prepare other instructional aids necessary for teaching home economics subject content;
8. to teach the lessons prior to teaching them in the student teaching situation, (Micro-presentation);
9. to evaluate teaching performance by critiquing video tape presentation; and finally
10. to get feedback from peers and university supervisor concerning performance.

APPENDIX G

CONNECTION VII

STUDENT TEACHING SEMINARS

During the student teaching period, Home Economics Student Teaching Seminars are coordinated by the university supervisor and held at the university. The Seminars are held every other week and afford the following advantages for the student teacher:

1. they allow student teachers an opportunity to interact by sharing teaching ideas, experiences, and concerns;
2. they allow further discussion of topics such as discipline, lesson plan preparation, student motivation, and time management;
3. they allow peer group support from individuals in similar situations;
4. they allow additional time to interact with the university supervisor; and
5. they allow opportunities to identify and discuss problem areas encountered in the student teaching experience.

NOTE: These seminars are scheduled after school for two hours.

Guest speakers are sometimes invited to the seminars to address specific concerns.

Filmstrips and other audio visual aids are used to further assist in clarifying areas of concern.

Student Teachers assume leadership roles in conducting the seminars.